

C o m m u n i t y



(Chicago Housing Authority)

If Your Son Should Ask ---

COMMUNITY ASKED ME to write an article about being a Negro parent in the South, and I have been putting it off for two months because I can't think of the words that can describe what this means. I asked my husband Jesse to help me, and he gave me a few ideas.

What stumped us both was how to tell the truth and remain charitable at the same time. So here I go now, doubtlessly rushing in where angels fear to tread because I don't know how to walk softly as I ought.

What We Want for Butch

My husband has the same problems doubled since fatherhood is so new to him (he is my son's stepfather) and we both are feeling our way prayerfully. We both know what we want for Butch and for all the children we may have.

First, we want him to love God, and out of this love, love the Church, her liturgy and sacraments, and love the multitudes who make up the members of the Mystical Body. We want him to have respect and reverence for the priests

who administer these sacraments and for the sisters who teach him in school.

To Be a Whole Person

Next, we want him to love his country, to respect its laws and Constitution. We want him to be a credit to his community and to feel personal responsibility for the achievement of cooperative good within it. We want him to be humble without being fearful or subservient. And because we believe these things to be impossible otherwise, we want Butch to be a whole person—intelligent, obedient, courageous and charitable.

I guess all parents want these things for their children plus the right and opportunity to form them in the framework of a good society. And every parent, I guess, finds in society problems which make these things difficult to accomplish.

(Continued on Page 4)

Social Life



(Elta Hulme of the Texas Observer)

Easter Homily *Spiritual*

This homily from the fifth century by St. Maximus of Turin, seems as vital to us today as when it was written.

BRETHREN. Wonderful and great is the gift God has conferred upon us through this Easter day of salvation. For by Himself rising from the dead, the Lord has granted resurrection to us all. He mounted from the depths, and thereby, in His own body, lifted us likewise from our low estate to an exalted height. For are we not, according to the Apostle, Christ's body and His members (1 Cor. 12)? If therefore Christ arose, so also necessarily did all His members.

Men Pass From Evil to Good

He had descended into hell. Now, by His passover from hell to the life of glory, He caused us to pass from vices to life. In the Hebrew language, the word Pasch signifies a passover, or an advance. And so through this paschal mystery of Christ's rising, men pass from an evil condition to one that is good.

What a good passing it is, to pass over from sin to sanctity; from vices to virtues; from old age to infancy. I mean the infancy of child-likeness, not of years. For all ages have their merits. But we had become like decrepit old men through the infirmity of sin; now, by Christ's rising, we have become young again with the innocence of children.

Christian Life Demands "Infancy"

True Christian life demands such "infancy." For as an infant child is incapable of anger, knows not how to defraud, and dares not strike back, so the adult Christian "child" does not become angry against those who offend him, does not take vengeance on those who cheat him, nor return blow for blow.

Turn Other Cheek

In fact, as the Lord commanded, he even prays for his enemies; to those who deprive him of his coat he gives also his cloak; and to those who strike him he turns the other cheek.

Moreover, such Christian child-likeness is superior to the infancy of nature. For the one does not know how to sin, the other deliberately refuses to sin.

The one is without fault because of the weakness of nature, the other is innocent through virtue. And certainly, greater praise is due those who refuse to sin than those who are unable to do so.

But, as we have said, every age has its merits. And so our ideal is none other than maturity of morals in the young, and innocence of childhood in the old.

For Scripture tells us: "Venerable old age is not counted by the number of years; but a man's understanding is the equivalent of grey hairs" (Wisd. 4:8). And to His apostles, who were grown men, the Lord says: "Unless you turn and become like this small child, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:2).

Innocence of Life

In other words, He recalls them to the fountainhead of their origin, and makes them return to their childhood, in order that they who had become infirm by bodily age might be born again by innocence of life. For the Savior Himself says: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

"Become Like This Small Child"

Therefore, He says to the apostles: "Unless you turn and become like this small child." He does not say, "like these small children," but "like this small child." He selects only one; He proposes only one.

Isaiah's Prophecy

Who can this extraordinary one be, whom He proposes to His disciples for imitation? I do not believe he could be merely one of the common crowd, but rather that he is from heaven. For there is indeed a child that has come from heaven, of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke: "A child is born to us, a son has been given to us" (Isaiah 9:6).

"Father, Forgive Them"

For He surely is that Child, who though innocent, when He was reviled, did not revile; who when He was struck, did not strike back; but who even in His bitter passion prayed for His enemies: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

That very simplicity of childhood, therefore, which infants have by nature, the Lord manifested yet more abundantly by His merciful love. None else than He can be the "Child" who is proposed for our imitation.

If we are to be "children," it is Him that we must follow. And how? He Himself has told us: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24).

A Walk for Justice

Public Accommodations

EVER SINCE last December we've been hearing about the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama. It was kicked off on December 1 when police arrested Mrs. Rosa Parks, a Negro, because she refused to give up her seat on a city bus to a white person.

Ministers Organize Boycott

Negro Protestant ministers organized a city-wide bus boycott to protest bus company policy. Montgomery's 60,000 Negroes, who make up 75 per cent of bus traffic, refused to ride city buses—and the boycott is 98 per cent effective. Needless to say, transportation by car pool or on foot, has entailed many hardships for them.

The Negroes there want these three demands met before they will discontinue the boycott.

Three Demands

1) Greater courtesy; 2) seating of passengers on a first-come, first-serve basis with Negroes filling the bus from the rear, whites from the front, and, 3) hiring of Negro bus drivers on buses serving predominantly Negro areas.

Eighty of the boycott leaders were arrested; the home of Rev. Martin King was bombed—but the boycott goes on.

Passive Resistance

The Negro boycott group is now loosely organized as the Montgomery Improvement Association. Its leaders stress that they will continue to use only peaceful, non-violent methods. Their emphasis on the spirit of love and charity should be an inspiration to us.

This editor believes that the Montgomery boycott ranks in race relations importance with the Supreme Court decision on school integration. It marks the first time that Southern Negroes have united so strongly for justice.

Reports coming out of Montgomery indicate that the movement there is inspired by deep religious convictions. The Rev. King told fellow Negroes: "Even if we are arrested every day, let nobody pull you so low as to hate. . . . We are a peace-loving people. We will win this struggle through passive resistance."

The staffs at Friendship House in New York, in Chicago, in Portland, and in Washington, D.C. discussed how we could best share in the struggle for justice and peace in Alabama. We believed that there must be an effort to control the evil inclinations that give rise to injustice and uncharity. We decided that our effort should be prayer and fasting.

Prayer and Fasting

On March 28 the staff and many of the volunteers fasted from solid food until sundown, for strength for ourselves and for all who are faced with decisions in this struggle. (The money we would have spent for food was sent to the Montgomery Improvement Association and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored people which is handling the defense in the court trial of the Montgomery leaders.) We fasted and prayed for racial justice to be achieved in our time.

Join With Us

There is work to be done in every part of our country. We urge you to work with the forces of good wherever you are. It is not enough to oppose the evil—we must organize the good.

We urge you to join with us. Let our fasting and prayers be for a peaceful and quick end to the struggle. Let us join our fast to the fast of Christ and our prayers to His "That they all may be one."

—M.L.H.

A Work for Justice

THIS IS NOT an editorial, but we thought perhaps our readers have been wondering about the changes on our masthead. Betty Schneider, our assistant editor, is on leave of absence. She's being replaced by Gene Huffine from the New York house.

Wedding Bells

Jean Stauss of the circulation department left the staff last month, and she and Bob Little will be married on April 7. This means that Delores Price is holding down the circulation department, valiantly trying to do the work of three people.

Our Thanks

We're grateful to part-time helpers like Mary Clinch, Cliff Thomas, Jerry Binz, Mary Cleary, Edith Strom, Charlotte Berg, Ruth Parrington, Pat Larsen, Colleen Kelly, and Sam Curry who have taken dictation, typed, stamped,

proof-read, and gone all over Chicago on errands. These people help out nights after work.

We're especially grateful to the nuns and students at Rosary College, St. Elizabeth's, Loyola, and St. Scholastica High Schools who have taken over the large jobs of getting out circulation letters.

Our COMMUNITY offices are cheerfully decorated. We'd like to see a few visiting volunteers adding to the decor.

An Invitation

If you would like to work full time without pay (like the staff) for a few weeks or months of your summer vacation, just drop us a line. You really won't be losing a thing, because God is never outdone in generosity. And you would be sharing in the work for interracial justice.

—M.L.H.

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Parents Are Teachers Too

"There are no prejudiced children, but only prejudiced parents."

(Reprinted from *The Voice of St. Jude*.)

TODAY THE AVERAGE SCHOOL CHILD in the United States, at least above the Mason-Dixon Line, has every opportunity to reach adult life well equipped for successful interracial living. This is a matter of no slight importance in a country such as ours where Negroes and whites must rub shoulders in so many walks of life.

Democracy Put in Practice

The child who attends a school where the rock-bottom tenets of democracy are put into practice is accustomed from the first day to see Negro and white children sit side by side in the classroom, and play together in the gym, on the playground, and on athletic teams.

Children Learn Integration

In social events sponsored by the school the white child learns to mingle freely with his dark-skinned companions. During weeks at summer camps Negroes and whites live happily in still more intimate contacts, and think nothing about it. Color lines likewise disappear in church and at the Communion rail where all kneel together to worship their Creator, the common Father of all men.

Modern textbooks, too, are a powerful source of Christian integrated living. In his American history classes the school child cannot fail to learn the inherent rights of all men in a democracy regardless of race, creed or color.

Contest for Teenagers

Yearly, in the Voice of Democracy contests all over the land our teen age orators astound us by their exalted sentiments of brotherhood and social justice which they do not merely mouth but literally believe. What a tremendous force, we say, these youngsters will become in their adult life. Surely they will wipe clean the national slate of all its past blots of injustice and intolerance.

Role of the Parent

The question is, however, will they really grow up to become this highly democratic type of American citizens? Before one can indulge in such idealistic probabilities for the future, another matter must be squarely faced. That is—the role of the parent and the kind of home in which our children live.

Up to this point we have considered only the child's formal education and his social contacts, all of which are quite beyond the walls of his home. Yet we must accept the extremely unpleasant possibility that the most exalted superstructure of a child's democratic living, thinking, and believing can collapse before parental intolerance within the family circle.

Antiquated Principles

Unless the average father and mother have kept abreast of the extraordinary changes brought about in the pattern of interracial relations in the United States during the past two or three decades, they are likely to be activated by a somewhat antiquated—and often unchristian—set of principles with reference to Negro-white relationships.

In view of this fact, we might even presume to say that the attitudes of parents will be a tremendous force either to strengthen or to destroy whatever democratic convictions a child will have acquired from his formal schooling.

Compare Reactions

If you are a parent vitally interested in seeing your children grow into true Christian adulthood, you might care to

compare your own reactions with some of the following. It is not uncommon for Johnnie and Janie in some families to hear this comment from Mom or Dad: "I don't see why you have to be the one to sit near that colored boy in school!" Maybe teacher will even get a note requesting a change of seats in the classroom.

After the May Procession Janie's young mind may be somewhat troubled by a parental reaction such as, "Why did they make you walk with that Negro girl? It's bad enough having them in our white schools, without . . ."

"Colored Are Moving In"

To the youngster who has just been learning all about the wonderful doc-

trine of the brotherhood of man, the Fatherhood of God, and that all men the world over are members of the Mystical Body of Christ, think how confusing the following reflection from the home folks must be, "Oh, dear, isn't it a shame the way the colored are all moving in around old St. Mary's parish! That used to be such a fine respectable neighborhood. But now all the good families are moving away. I just never go down that way anymore—it really isn't safe."

The Constitution Versus Restrictive Covenants

As Jane and John go on in school and learn all about the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence—that all men are created free and equal, they may find the conversation around the supper table a little baffling. Mom complains about that Negro family that has just moved in only two blocks away! Perhaps they hear Dad talking about signing a petition to keep the colored from buying or renting any property on "our street."

Not for Table Conversation

Jane and John are active in high school affairs. They're on the Junior-Senior Prom committee and working

hard for a 100 per cent student attendance. But they soon discover that topic is not table conversation, for Mom and Dad are completely outraged at the news that they're going to admit Negroes to the prom. They may even go so far as to forbid John and Jane to attend.

Up to this point stress has been placed on certain unchristian, undemocratic reactions of parents. It is possible, however, that in many homes these situations never arise to cloud the domestic horizons, since there are numerous areas in the United States where interracial schools do not exist.

Under such circumstances in which youngsters do not enjoy the privilege of learning to cope with interracial con-

tacts, it would seem that parents have an added obligation to supply for this lack in their children's social development.

Parents Set Good Example

Within the home circle, parents can and must take special care to speak reverently of all God's children, regardless of their color, creed, or limited cultural advantages. They will never, even within the privacy of the home, refer to those of a darker skin by such epithets as "Darky" or others still more unworthy.

Don't Jump to Conclusions

They will not be quick to suspect a Negro of any unsolved crime which happens to be making current headlines. Never will their children hear them speak of the Negro as "All right in his place, but—." Always they will think and act upon the principle that the Negro is a child of God, and as such endowed with the same inalienable right to aspire to and achieve anything within the grasp of his white brothers.

Children Learn By Watching

The bright, keen eyes of childhood will be watching Dad who works on that assembly line, in that store, in that

office with a Negro, and Dad will remember to show his dark-skinned fellow worker the same respect he would show to any other human being. And if he must at times discuss the faults of his Negro associate he will not ascribe this to racial inferiority, but to human frailty common to all men, without exception.

Practice Speaks Louder Than Words

It sometimes happens that parents are thrown into intimate relationships with the colored through business or social contacts. The child who notes that Mom and Dad work side by side with Negroes on committees, and extend to them the same courtesy, consideration, and trust they would pay to whites has learned a far more vital lesson in democracy than any textbook or class discussion could ever give him. And when the newspapers carry stories of injustice to the underprivileged, the truly Christian parent will carefully analyze the case and give the child the correct unbiased viewpoint.



(Ray Borges, St. Joseph's Magazine)

Color lines disappear as teenagers work and study together.

Some years ago J. Edgar Hoover uttered a classic statement which the world will not readily forget: "There are no delinquent children, but only delinquent parents." Studies in juvenile crime have long since proved the truth of this dictum.

"Only Prejudiced Parents"

Mr. Hoover might as truly have said, "There are no prejudiced children, but only prejudiced parents." In spite of the combined efforts of the church, the school, and numerous civic organizations, it is possible for our children to grow up immune to the exalted principles of Christianity and democracy if they have not seen them exemplified in the daily living of their parents.

Youth is quick to think of elders as "old fogies" and may even say so at times. But for all that, it can be said that the deepest and most lasting patterns of adult thought and conduct will be heavily influenced by what a child learns from parents in the home.

—Sister Agnes Immaculata, S.N.D.

Sister Agnes Immaculata teaches English at Julianne High School, Dayton, Ohio. For ten years she taught English and was Dean of Women at the University of Dayton. Her religious and educational articles and her short stories and poetry have appeared in a number of Catholic magazines.

Views

Jim Crow Order Boomerangs

A NEW TWIST WAS given to voters' tests in Minden, Louisiana. Originally designed to restrict Negro votes, the Louisiana statute, when literally enforced by registrar Mrs. Winnie P. Clement, has had the opposite effect.

Mrs. Clement received a mandate to enforce the statute requiring that all prospective voters be able to read any clause of the United States Constitution and "give a reasonable interpretation thereof." The mandate was issued after she was accused by the pro-segregation Citizens Council of being too lenient with Negro citizens. In enforcing the laws Mrs. Clement has flunked

24 prospective white voters and two Negro prospects.

"They want Negroes to interpret the Constitution," she said. "That's all right and it's the law. But if Negroes have to do it, so do white people. That's only being fair."

Needless to say, Mrs. Clement's position has not enhanced her standing in the community. However, she defends her policy by pointing out to protesters that she is only following orders of the police jury. She adds that she has no intention of quitting her job despite pressure being brought to bear on her from various sources.

Gallup Polls South

THE GALLUP ORGANIZATION reported in March on its findings, in a poll of the 13 Southern States, on white and Negro opinion on the Supreme Court's school decision and the recent Interstate Commerce Commission ruling outlawing segregated travel.

On the Supreme Court decision:

	Southern whites	Southern Negroes
Approved	16%	53%
Disapproved	80%	36%
Undecided	4%	11%

On the Interstate Commerce Commission ruling which prohibits segregated buses, trains and waiting rooms:

	Southern whites	Southern Negroes
Approved	19%	82%
Disapproved	76%	14%
Undecided	5%	4%

The degree of opposition to both rulings was found to be related directly to the size of the Negro population in each of the 13 states.

In the five states of the deep South, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina and Mississippi, the opposition is greatest. More than one-third of the population in these states is Negro and nearly nine out of ten whites opposed the rulings.

Over one-third of the Southern Negroes favored continued segregation in the schools. The main reasons for this were found to be practical ones, such as the fear that Negro children would receive unequal treatment in integrated schools and the probability that most Negro teachers would lose their jobs.

If Your Son Should Ask

(Continued from page 1)

But what other problems, if any, does the Negro parent in the South find? I think he finds a great many more, a multitude of things on every level which make it harder to raise his child.

Mystical Body and Segregated Churches

Butch learns at school about the Mystical Body, and to call God his Father and all men his brothers. But outside the classroom he finds two churches—one for him, and one for his white brothers.

He may live very near the "white one" and very far from the "colored one." Although he is colored, he may sometimes go to the white one, but he does not "belong."

White Churches Are Indifferent

Again and again even in the friendliest white parish church (not to mention the more common indifferent or downright unfriendly white churches) things are done and said to remind him that he does not and cannot belong.

To be honest, this has been the exception in the case of our own son, but then we live near a white church which I know to be an exception. At this church very little is done or said, and

then only inadvertently, to indicate we do not belong.

Churches Use Criterion of Color

Even in the house of God, color determines whether or not one belongs. It is a terrible thing for a child not to belong.

Jim Crow Life

Butch sees that only colored children go to his school. In the Catholic school he passes there are only white children. He plays in a park with colored children only, and rides in the section of the bus reserved for colored people. He knows that this is not his own choice nor ours, but the way things must be.

Finest Park—For Whites Only

He sees that the finest movies, the biggest parks, the newest, most modern schools (at least until recently, when we see things changing here in this big city of Memphis but not in the country towns around us yet) all are for white only.

When he passes a work gang he sees a white man giving orders while Negroes do the manual work, the dirty, hard, thankless work. If he goes to town he sees that all the sales clerks, the office workers, the bus drivers have white faces.

Child Made to Feel Inferior

No matter what we tell him, Butch can see for himself, and think for himself, and he wonders. We don't want him to feel inferior, but what does this combination of things beyond our control contribute if not a feeling and sense of inferiority?

"Why Am I Different?"

"Why am I different? Why can't I do the things that other children do? Why must I always take the back seat on the bus? Or the last place in line while others who come later get served first?"

"Why is a special place reserved for

White Citizens Councils

IN TENSE ALABAMA the white Citizens Councils have been split by anti-Semitic sentiments. In a thinly veiled attack upon the anti-Semitic element, the Central Alabama Citizens' Council declared that it "is not interested in religious bias or prejudice, but is concerned only in maintaining segregation." This was in response to the North Alabama Citizens Council's requirement that its members "believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ." This North Alabama group refused to join the statewide Central Alabama Council and believes that Jews should fight to

maintain segregation through their own organizations. Both organizations claim about 60,000 members.

The injection of the theme of anti-Semitism is an ominous one in a state where the memory is still fresh of a Klu Klux Klan that welded together religious and racial prejudice, and in its fury turned on both Negroes and whites. When asked if his Councils contained any of the old KKK element, the founder of the North Alabama Citizens Council replied, "we cannot keep them out, but we do try to see that they do not gain positions of leadership."

News From S. Africa

SOUTH AFRICA is a country where a minority of two and a half million governs a majority of 11 million. The latest step taken to ensure this perversion of democracy was the removal of 50,000 "Cape colored" from the common voting list in the Union of South Africa. This move relegates the colored (persons of mixed blood) to the same political level as the natives, and gives the Nationalists a firmer hold on the political life of the country.

In editorial comment the Louisville Courier-Journal pointed out that this may be the Nationalists' costliest vic-

tory because it forced the colored into common cause with the natives. Among this group of colored are solid and well-educated citizens who can form a fresh core of leadership.

Another note of hope in this somewhat dismal picture is the statement by Prime Minister Johannes G. Strijdom that South Africa sought friendship and cooperation with non-European (Negro) states of Africa. Observers express the view that this is a change in policy from that of total exclusion practiced by former Prime Minister Danile F. Malan.

Integration Saves \$1 Million

OKLAHOMA'S PLAN to integrate schools is expected to save between \$750,000 and \$1 million in state aid funds according to the State Board of Education.

School districts will combine the totals of Negro and white students in fig-

uring the number of teachers needed. Both races in a school district will have the same transportation. Officials figure about 175 teachers will be eliminated. The plan is expected to speed up integration of white and Negro pupils in the classroom.

me alone? That Chinese boy, his father owns the grocery down the street, he goes to places I can't go to. Why, when he isn't white either?

"Some Spanish Girls Are Darker"

"Some of the Spanish girls at the white school are darker than some of my classmates, but they are white and my classmates are colored. . . .

"Mother, what does 'colored' mean?"

In a child's way of expressing himself, I think, from what I have seen and what Butch has asked, that these are the things that run in his mind. I know these are things I wondered about as a child.

"I Don't Want Him to Hate"

And what answer can I give? I don't want him to feel inferior, yet I don't want him to hate and resent people either. He is too young to understand abstractions and the complex philosophy which might charitably explain these things without justifying them.

Children Are Extremists

Children are extremists, and see only blacks and whites, not the fine shadings of grey that adults learn to utilize.

For them things are good or bad, true or false, that is all. People are friends or foes. The friends are people who do nice things for me. The foes are people who hurt me.

Skin Color Not Important

We tell Butch that he is as good as anybody. That it is not the color of his skin that is important, but what he is inside.

"Why Don't Priests Tell People?"

When he then asks, "Then why do people make a difference?" we answer, "Because they don't love God enough." But then he wants to know about the priests, why they don't tell people better, and he wants to know if they don't know either.

Perhaps it is only an evasion which can't last long, but I say, "It's because



most of the people aren't Catholics and wouldn't believe the priest if he told them."

So far Butch accepts that. When he does not, by then perhaps I'll have a better answer for him.

We Welcome All Races in Home

In our own home we welcome both white and colored friends. He sees here an equality of friendship between the races which silently supports the things we have said to him.

We also visit the home of white friends occasionally, and the parents talk while the children play, all on a friendly, equal basis, just as if we were all white or all colored. We hope this



Helen Caldwell Riley and son

Films Teach Understanding

TEACHERS KNOW THE VALUE of movies in catching and holding the attention of young audiences. Classroom films can teach the facts about prejudice and stimulate students to apply principles of interracial justice.

The National Education Association has prepared a **Guide to Films in Human Relations** which may be secured, at \$1.00 a copy, from the Department of Audio-Visual Instruction, 1201 16th Street, Northwest, Washington 6, D.C.

Complete List of Movies

The **Guide** presents a complete listing of films on all phases of human relations, the addresses of the distributors and a short synopsis and critical evaluation of each film.

Of particular interest to teachers, PTA members, and group discussion leaders is the section on utilization of films. "What do you want your film to do?" the **Guide** asks.

Several Uses

Among the uses of movies listed in the **Guide**, three are of special interest to teachers dealing with inter-group relations problems:

1. Discussion—to raise questions concerning which people have a difference of opinion or value or judgment or belief—in order that the group will explore the problem in discussion.
2. Identification—those watching a movie dealing with personal and social problems usually identify themselves with those on the screen.
3. Action motivation—to bring about individual or group action in response to some social problems.

Here are some of the films discussed:

• **Heritage.** This cartoon in color establishes the concept that human rights stem from God. It shows that the rights of citizens are accompanied by corresponding responsibilities. The story shows what happens when a person completely disregards the rights of others in his community.

• **To Live Together.** Children of different racial backgrounds participate in summer camp activities. Their prejudices, when present, are shown as the results of their parents' attitudes. The film deals with constructive lessons arising from the harmonious living of the camp and depicts the natural instincts for friendliness between Negro and white children.

• **The Brotherhood of Man.** This movie, based on the pamphlet, "Races of Mankind," appeals to all age groups. It examines scientific facts relating to the biological similarity of all peoples. Many "race" theories which claim superiority for certain groups are exploded.

• **An Equal Chance.** This film explains how the New York State Commission Against Discrimination deals with complaints of job bias, from cause to cure.

• **Skipper Learns a Lesson.** For younger folks the story of a dog named Skipper who moves into a new neighborhood and shows prejudice toward the funny looking dogs he encounters.

His color is suddenly changed by a pail of paint so that he too becomes a funny looking dog. He learns the bitterness caused by discrimination, and the idea begins to dawn on Skipper that color doesn't make a real difference.

We buy Butch books and tell him stories which show the Negro as an ordinary, or heroic, or good person, as well as books which tell of blond fairy princesses and fairies with skins like milk. We want him unconsciously to absorb a feeling of security and equality as naturally as other circumstances in his environment tend to make him absorb feelings of inferiority and insecurity.

Relatives Present Problem

As far as possible we try to discourage well-meaning relatives and friends who go to either of two extremes in talking to Butch or before him. One extreme would make him ashamed of his color and race, which he can't change. The other would make him hateful and resentful of all white people, waiting for a chance at revenge. Conversations like these present a problem, especially with older relatives, and I haven't figured out a real solution yet.

"I Must Be a Good Example"

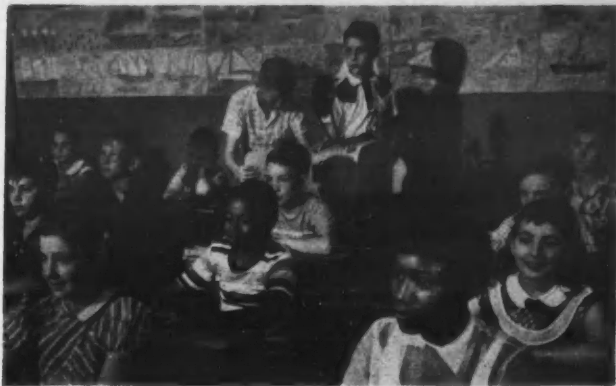
I've told the things we want and the things we believe, and it is for these things we work. As a Catholic parent I know that I must teach my child and be a good example to him as he grows up in an environment where there are unfriendly feelings between people of different races.

As a very young parent I don't claim to have a blueprint of the way this can or ought to be done. Rather I confess to a great ignorance and admit that in raising our child, we hope in darkness lightened only in faith. We hope in the ultimate providence of God which will result in good for those who trust Him and work as well as they know.

And all the time we pray. We pray that through it all we may yet love God and each other and other people and so become like Him.

—Helen Caldwell Riley

Mrs. Riley directs *Blessed Martin House*, a day nursery and house of hospitality in Memphis, Tennessee. The former Helen Caldwell Day, she is the author of *COLOR EBONY and NOT WITHOUT TEARS*.



(Chicago Public Schools)

• **The Toymaker.** Especially good for elementary school children but suitable for all age groups, this movie tells the story of two puppets. One is striped, the other spotted.

They love each other until they suddenly discover that they are different, and friction and hate develop. Then the toymaker shows them that it is his hand that makes all their movements possible, and since it is his right hand that controls one puppet, and his left hand the other, they hurt only themselves when harm is inflicted.

The National Education Association

suggests that teachers using films such as these should also be acquainted with good techniques of film utilization. Two pamphlets on this subject are recommended: "How to Obtain and Screen Films for Community Use" (25 cents) and "Community Film Use" (30 cents), obtainable from the Film Council of America, 600 Davis Street, Evanston, Illinois.

—Mary Clinch

Miss Clinch, a former F.H. staff worker, is an employment interviewer for the state of Illinois.

WANTED

Men Who DO NOT Want to Make Good

If you are among a growing number of young men who are not sure they wish to make a million dollars,

If you would like to work, but to work for something more than weekly wages,

If you would like your work itself to be an expression of your love for God and your fellow man,

If you feel a personal obligation to bring Christ's justice to the field of race relations,

If you are between 20 and 35 years of age, Then . . .

I think I know a way of life that might appeal to you.

For information please write to:

Anne Foley, National Director
Friendship House
4233 South Indiana Avenue
Chicago 15, Illinois

P.S. Women may apply also.

Is Massa in De Cold, Cold Ground?

"AND BACK of the plantation house were a group of little cabins where the Negro slaves lived, known as the 'quarters.'"

The little fifth grade girl read the words clearly and distinctly. Most of the class were following the reading, but one boy in the front row began to giggle. He made some comment, which I didn't catch, to a girl across the aisle.

"Of Course We're Negroes"

"Of course we're Negroes," she said aloud. The class looked up, some with smiles, some with puzzled faces, and awaited developments.

"Yes, Massa"

It had seemed to me that we might have such a moment when I read over the history lesson the night before. The chapter, which was told in story form, dealt with life in early Virginia and the customs of those days. The only thing I objected to was the "Yes, massa" of the only Negro character who spoke.

Slavery Still Affects U.S.

One doesn't expect a fifth grade history book to discuss in detail whether or not slavery was an evil, and the effect its establishment still has in United States society. But something was needed, in or out of the book, if the children in that class were not to feel that Negroes and slavery went together like ham and eggs.

I asked the class if they knew of any other nations or races that have been in slavery. Slowly we listed a few—the Jews in Egypt, the Indians in South America. We could have gone on—

Greek slaves as tutors for Roman children, and slaves from Britain sold in the market place in Rome.

I think, at any rate, that the point was made—many peoples and races have been in slavery throughout history. That it is nothing to the discredit of the enslaved race, but rather to the nation which has enslaved them.

White Man's World

As I glanced through the pictures in their text, I realized that we have a long way to come. There were few, if any, pictures of ordinary middle-class Negroes in the scenes of modern American life. What must this class of Negro children be thinking? From their history book they must assume it is a white man's world.

I felt it was up to me as a teacher to be alert to these stereotyped presentations and be ready to counteract them with true ones. Otherwise these children, and white children too, will grow up with the idea that the Negro's place is on the plantation saying, "Yes, massa."

—Ann Stull

Anyone who visited F.H. in Chicago within the last six years, knows Ann Stull. Currently on leave of absence, she's doing substitute teaching.

"If we sincerely love our neighbors, we should do everything possible for them right now to help them become aware of their worth as individuals, to make the respect for the individual certain, to bring men together in unity."

—Yves Montcheuill in
Guide for Social Action

All parents have
problems, but
Negro parents
face additional
ones of
prejudice,
discrimination.

(Courtesy of U.N.)

will offset the harm of enforced segregation which he meets everywhere else and consequent feelings of inferiority.

"Then We Are Ashamed"

In his presence we try to avoid uncharitable generalities about white people though every now and then, when something terrible happens between the races, we forget. Then we are ashamed.

But we know from this weakness in ourselves how easy it is to speak harshly of others because of color, and identify people as good or bad on that basis. We hope we can overcome this soon, for it is, I believe, a fault equally ugly whether in the Negro or in the white person.

New York: *Organizations* Harlem Open House

AFTER TALKING about moving for so long that it had become a joke, we finally found a three-room profes-

roughly about a sixth of the combined size of the former five-room flat and three store fronts. Since organized ma-



Ellen Tarry, former staff worker and author of children's books, pours tea at Open House.

(Lou Lisi)

sional apartment, and in January literally signed the lease before we were fully aware of what had happened. The pace for the next month and a half was frantic.

New Quarters—Old Brownstone

Our new place on the first floor of an old, well-preserved brownstone is

terial assistance will not be a part of our current program, it seemed that if the accumulation of eighteen years could be sorted so that only essentials were taken, the place would be adequate in size.

Artist Gives Advice

We sought advice from artist Bob

Rambush, who gave us an informal course on functional and aesthetic aspects of interior decoration. It came as a shock to many of us staff and vols that things can be both inexpensive and in good taste.

Files Get New Lease on Life

We learned that our hideous old file cabinets could be painted the colors of the walls, serving the dual purpose of toning down their conspicuousness and making them look attractive. As a result we are probably the only office in all of New York with gray, yellow and off-white file cabinets. For further unobtrusiveness, desks and nondescript chairs were painted black.

Keynote Is Modern

Modern functional furniture was the keynote. Lounges and desk tops constructed from refinished doors, a few brightly colored ring chairs, all serve to set an atmosphere which can make persons who enter aware of their dignity on the visual level as well as on the heartfelt one.

Last Minute Scramble

The last Sunday in February was set as the time for Open House. Late the night before we were still doing last minute painting and carpentry, and practically everyone who came through the door was pressed into service as a floor waxer. An educational display with special emphasis on **COMMUNITY** was set up.

Chancery Sends Representative

Mrs. Ruth Brown, Ellen Tarry, Nancy Grennell Dubois and Anne Foley had

consented to preside at the tea table. Monsignor James V. Hart, pastor of our new parish, Our Lady of Lourdes, represented the Chancery by blessing the house for us.

It's a Success!

The Open House was a huge success. About 250 people crowded into these three rooms, and it was wonderful! People from every type of background were present. There were old friends of the House, and those who'd come for the first time. Everyone mingled happily and talked of all sorts of things, from the especially beautiful day to the deplorable situation in Alabama where Autherine Lucy is fighting for the right to an education.

New Friends and Old

The binding factor was an interest in Friendship House, and we felt that when people left, new friendships which cut across superficial differences had been formed and many old ones renewed.

And so the new Harlem house is officially open at 417 West 145th Street. The work presently being done and envisioned for the future is somewhat different from that done in the old location, arising from a necessary response to the needs of 1956, which differ in their expression from the needs of 1938. We hope and pray that the spirit of Friendship House, which is Christ's love, will continue to prevail.

—Jean R. Hogenmiller

Jean is on the staff at Harlem F.H.

Casita Story *Friendship House*

IT IS with a bit of nostalgia that I begin writing about the Casita, our children's clubroom in Chicago, and an incident that happened 10 years ago when we were still at 305 East 43rd Street.

That Eddie Johnson, who seemed to have few ideas beyond getting the basketball out of the toy closet and aiming it at the nearest statue, should have a very concrete idea on his status as a Negro was a revelation to me.

Children Surprise Counsellor

It came as a surprise that he was all too aware that "white people don't like Negroes, and that's why Negroes have to live in awful places."

It all came out on the day we first tried to talk to the children about interracial justice — about just what Friendship House is working for.

Example Better Than Precept

Our counsellor group had always been integrated. As Margaret Halsey says in *Color-Blind*, "Example is better than precept. Children are naturally imitative and are much influenced by the behavior of adults. When they see adults of both races working together on a common job, it impresses them at deeper levels of their minds than lectures, or even the companionship of children of another race."

No White Children in Neighborhood

Teaching through having white and colored children play together, so strongly recommended by authorities, was in our case an impossibility. Because we were (and are) in a highly segregated neighborhood, there are no white children to draw on.

Started with Blessed Martin

We had begun by telling about our patron, Blessed Martin de Porres. In his interracial parenthood and his very life, he was an instrument of interracial peace. From there we tried to build in the children a pride in the accomplishments of Negroes.

And that day, finally, we came to discussions which brought out some revealing thinking.

"Sometimes white people are nice,"

conceded Richard. "One time when my mother and I were going to St. Louis, mother lost her purse and a white lady found it."

Catherine remembered the day she smiled brightly at a little white girl on the el train. The little white girl came over and slapped her.

Youngsters Question Segregation

The children constantly brought up the point that white people don't want to live around Negroes. Without my demanding a reason, it was evident that their young minds were searching gropingly for the "why."

"The Way for Colored People"

David thought it was because "colored people make so much noise." Shirley speculated on the matter of colored people not having much money. No one seemed to be able to hit the nail on the head, and I noticed a very reluctant acceptance of what Richard called "the way for colored people."

Roberta Strikes a Balance

A balance was struck when Roberta noted that there were bad boys at her school and that they were colored. Then someone remembered that Miss Betty (me) was white and so was Mr. Bill. And Richard closed off with the comment that colored people should come around and meet the white folks at Friendship House because "they are nice."

The discussion ended, and the children had their lunch. In one minute, interest was concentrated on all-day suckers and the circle game scheduled for the afternoon.

Our ten minute discussion had probably taught us counsellors more than the children. It was obvious, however, that the youngsters were thinking. At eight or nine or ten, they were trying to figure prejudice out. And in a small way, we at Friendship House tried to provide them with the answers.

—Betty Schneider

Betty Schneider has worked at F.H. almost continuously since 1938. Having taken a leave of absence, she is back home in LeRoy, Minnesota.

Chicago: *Friendship House* Politics and Religion

"THERE IS no Catholic Politics," Minnesota's Congressman Eugene McCarthy stated to an audience of 120 people at Friendship House in Chicago March 11, "but we can in a relative sense speak of a society being Catholic if order is based on justice."

Just Social Order

How to attain that order is the difficult question, since "to a large extent politics is an operation in the practical order," he said, "and the politician must frequently face the alternative of a program altogether rejected as against some program."

"In many cases we cannot draw lines as clearly as we would like. There is a border here, a border there, and in between uncertainty. Within this area, the Catholic should be distinguished by his disposition and attitude."

Traits of this attitude, he continued, should be a willingness to take some risks, with mistakes — if mistakes are made — due to having trusted others too much, and a certain measure of optimism believing man can advance, realizing we may fail, but try to do what we can.

Powell Amendment

A questioner raised the problem of the proposed Federal Aid to Education bill before Congress, with the controversial Powell amendment.

"Here is not a question of principle," the Congressman said in reply. "We are faced with a practical problem."

"I believe in the House we can get passage for a bill which includes recognition of the Supreme Court decision, granting funds to states that have a plan for integration which some responsible people say is good or that have taken some action, and refusing funds to states which are completely opposed."

"Such a bill would not pass the Senate, but at least there would be a public demonstration of the House's majority position. This would insure a more acceptable bill coming out of the Senate-House conference committee."

Mr. McCarthy proposed as a model for politicians Thomas More, although "in political problems he was not very

successful." He did not solve the King's marriage difficulties, nor peace among Christian rulers, nor the impending break in the Church.

"But at his death he could make this defense," the congressman declared, "which those could not who had kept aloof: he had tried, he had entered into the field, he had accepted responsibility."

"We must strive," he concluded, "to be able to say with Thomas More, 'I have been the king's good servant, but God's good servant first.'"

Miss Ruth L. Worthington, devoted volunteer of Chicago's Friendship House, died March 3 at the age of 96. Until the last months, she was un-



(Maria Rampello)

Not a model home, but new Harlem Friendship House.

able to leave her room, Miss Worthington was always on hand for all House activities.

Staff and volunteers participated in singing the funeral Mass, "the sacrifice offered on behalf of the soul of Thy handmaid," and Bishop Sheil preached the sermon.

—Mary Dolan

COMMUNITY

Young People's Books for Brotherhood

RECENTLY a national magazine featured a news story, "What I Tell My Son About Race." Two fathers in the Deep South were trying to explain some of the "strange customs" practiced there.

One of the fathers, a Negro, attempted to answer his eight-year-old's question, "Why can't I drink out of the white water fountain?" His embarrassment was no greater than that of the white father who tried to answer his young son who protested, "Why do they want to go to our schools? Why can't they be satisfied in their own schools?" Both fathers were having a rough time.

Powerful Instruments

We who believe in the importance of the printed word can't help but feel that a book or two might have been helpful to both the men and their sons. Books are powerful instruments in the world of ideas.

Children's books are no less powerful. They can be one telling way of helping children toward an understanding of the world and its many kinds of people.

Children Find Own Answers

Parents and teachers who are searching for a way of guiding youth in a democratic society are sometimes surprised to find good books which deal with many of the current problems. Many of them do not attempt to solve the problems, but they do point up the questions, and young people find their own answers by discussing in a forthright manner what they have read in the books.

Beginning with the picture book ages, five to seven, there are books which show how children of different races can play and work together.

TWO IS A TEAM by Jerrold Beim (Harcourt-Brace, 1945, \$1.75), is one of the best books of its kind.

It shows through the medium of very attractive pictures, a Negro boy and a white boy in the happy relationships of play, of visiting in each other's homes, quarrelling as boys often do, and of forgetting the quarrel and cooperating as a friendly team.

SWIMMING HOLE by Jerrold Beim (Morrow, 1951, \$2.00), is a book for nine

and ten-year-olds. It is a forthright presentation of the problems of rejection and how small boys work out their own group's problem of color prejudice.

Marguerite de Angeli has written a delightful story for small girls, **BRIGHT**



(Chicago Public Schools)

APRIL (Doubleday, 1946, \$2.50). It is a story of April Bright, a Negro Brownie Scout who proves by kindness that a Girl Scout is a sister to all other Girl Scouts and color of the skin makes no difference. April's mother wisely explains that April is "only different as flowers are different, in color." This is something that even a very small child can understand.

Florence Hayes, in **SKID** (Houghton-Mifflin, 1948, \$2.50), presents the story of the only Negro child in a northern school. Skid, a boy from the Deep South, proves by his helpfulness and loyalty that he is truly one of the group.

LITTLE VIC by Doris Gates (Viking, 1951, \$2.50), shows how a Negro boy's devotion to a thoroughbred race horse transcends insults and prejudice from an adult.

Sister Mary Margarite in her lovely book, **MARTIN'S MICE** (Follett, 1952, \$2.40), presents an unforgettable hero, Blessed Martin de Porres, and his love for tiny creatures. It is a poetic story, beautifully illustrated for older readers

in grades six to eight.

One of the greatest needs of young people is the need to achieve. Reading about the lives of great men and women fires the imagination of youth. Some of the best books being published today are books about the lives of eminent people. And these books are very popular.

PRUDENCE CRANDALL: WOMAN OF COURAGE by Elizabeth Yates (Aladdin Books, 1955, \$3.00), gives

many parts of our country today. The stoning of the little Negro girls and the arrest and prosecution of their teacher happened in 1833, but it could easily be 1956.

Sometimes a look at the past can help youth interpret the world of today. Certainly stories of persons of great faith that have come down through the ages can help to prove what many wise leaders are stressing today—youth's need for a deep, abiding faith in God.

Many authors and publishers are aware of this. So many excellent books are offered that it is difficult to choose one for this list. Standing high in this class is **OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE** by Helen Rand Parish (Viking, 1955, \$3.00), a story of Juan Diego, a poor Mexican Indian. On his way to church Juan saw the Virgin Mary who gave him a message for the Bishop of Mexico City. Although Juan saw and heard

SWIMMING HOLE by Jerrold Beim, William Morrow & Co., Inc., \$2.00, may be ordered through **Community**.

the Virgin four times, no one believed him. How his faith and loyalty were rewarded makes this a heart-warming story which is treasured by all Catholics.

As parents, teachers and librarians, let us use these tools that are so readily available in many places in order that Brotherhood may become more than just a word in families, in communities and in the world.

Charlemae Rollins

Mrs. Rollins is the Children's Librarian at the Hall Branch, Chicago Public Library.

Book Review Psychology and Prejudice

OVERCOMING PREJUDICE by Bruno Bettelheim. Science Research Associates, 57 W. Grand Ave., Chicago, 1953. 48 pp. 40 cents.

PROFESSOR Bruno Bettelheim of the University of Chicago attempts in this Better Living Booklet to tell teachers and parents how they can help children overcome prejudice. It should be a helpful introduction for those confronted with prejudiced behavior in themselves or others—a warning of its harmful effects on the bigots as well as on their victims.

Roots of Prejudice Noted

In six short chapters Professor Bettelheim tries to make a little clearer what prejudice is. He shows the patterns it takes, its roots, how scapegoating results, and how stereotyping may affect children.

When eight-year-old Kerry took five-year-old Tony's ball, Tony promptly took four-year-old Craig's scooter. This same thing happens among adults, but with much more rationalization, when minority group members are made scapegoats for anything from losing a job to causing a war.

Then there are the stereotypes—the Negro so often portrayed in the movies as a menial—which help mold children's conceptions.

Bad Effect on Victimizers

Bettelheim explains the effect of prejudice on the victim through defiance, withdrawal, and submissiveness; and on the victimizer through fear of his victim, emotional disturbance, and personal disintegration.

How a Minority Child Reacts

A minority group child may react to prejudice and discrimination by asserting defiantly that the group to which he belongs is even more powerful and far better than the discriminatory group. He may withdraw from situations in which he is likely to encounter members of the dominant group. He may try to appease the discriminators: run errands for them, flatter them, join them in disliking his own group, and

end by never being fully accepted by them and having guilt feelings toward members of his own group.

Adult's Role Described

The role of the adult in helping children grow up free of prejudice is pointed out. According to the author, the most important requirement in the fight against prejudice is emotional security. The adult who is emotionally secure can help the victims of prejudice; his help is vitiated to the extent that he is himself emotionally insecure.

How to Help Prejudiced Child

Especially helpful were those sections on aiding the minority and prejudiced child. Here, as elsewhere in the pamphlet, illustrative experiences were presented to guide readers in the problems, and the proper application of principles.

Best Opportunity for Teachers

One last point. It seems to me that the author misses the best pedagogical opportunity for avoiding prejudice by not mentioning teaching children that they are all created by God, and have a unique value in His sight, and the implications which follow from this fact.

—Frank Petta

Mr. Petta, a longtime volunteer worker at both the Harlem and Chicago Friendship Houses, teaches in the Chicago public schools.

The Amazing Story of
St. Germaine
By Msgr. Joseph A. Keener



Pope Gregory XVI called Germaine "The Saint We Need" and Pope Pius IX added, "Go to Germaine." Once you come to know this lovely girl, you will never be able to get her out of your mind—or your heart.

Order the remarkable story of St. Germaine today. 45 pages, single copy only 15c.

Write for liberal rack or group discounts.

C. F. PETELLE, Box 249, Maywood, Ill.

Readers Write

Dear Staff: This is quite a place to be. I know you can imagine how wonderful it was to hear Archbishop Rummel's letter read. To me it was earth-shaking, especially after hearing the annual appeal for the Negro and Indian missions on the preceding Sunday and experiencing the usual feelings of a group apart—with a perhaps unfair feeling that the other side is being paternalistic. The frustrations and feelings of insecurity and inferiority which one cannot escape in the South, the visible signs which constantly confront a Negro, are eased after hearing from an authority the simple truth—segregation is a sin.

I also heard the Archbishop talk at a city-wide teachers' institute, and it was so good to hear him tell of the practical ways in which a better attitude toward all people could be brought about even before integration. There are certainly a lot of good willing workers in this section of His vineyard.

Dr. Bertha Mugrauer of Caritas was seriously injured in a car accident and will be hospitalized for some time. She is offering her suffering for peaceful integration. Please pray for Bertha and all of us here in Louisiana.

LORETTA BUTLER
New Orleans, Louisiana

Editor's Note: Caritas is a lay apostolic group in New Orleans which works on a parish level. Dr. Mugrauer, director of Caritas, teaches sociology at Xavier University.

Dear Editor: I enjoyed the February COMMUNITY very much. Incidentally, regarding that Navy article, I wonder if you've ever watched the Phil Silvers TV show. It's a comedy about an army sergeant, and in the platoon there is one, or maybe two Negroes. It's all very natural, and there's no particular point made of it. Once in a while it'll show WAC's in the office, and generally one is a Negro. I'm curious as to just whose idea it was—it might be they're patting the Army on the back, or it might be Silvers' idea. I don't know any other program that does that, and I thought you might be interested.

EILEEN O'HARA LEXAU
St. Paul, Minnesota

Dear Editor: Please send me an issue of the paper COMMUNITY. It looks like one of the few papers put out by a church organization which is really grappling with social problems today. I come from the Chicago area and wish to know more of interracial problems. Thank you.

HARRIET D. ARPEE
Smith College
Northampton, Massachusetts

How You Can Help Improve Race Relations

Join in COMMUNITY's drive to educate people to the problems of minority groups

It's a psychological fact that people have less fear of those who are different if they understand their problems. Educating people to the problems of minority groups has been COMMUNITY's main purpose since it was established in 1941.

The drive to improve race relations and lessen discrimination is on the upswing. The recent Supreme Court ruling against segregation in schools points up both the progress already made and the road ahead.

Join COMMUNITY's annual subscription drive.

Who Can Help in Community's Work for Unity?

- **Individual subscribers**—Perhaps you have friends who would be interested in COMMUNITY.
- **Parish groups**—Many pastors allow parish groups to sell COMMUNITY after Masses on Sundays. Have you asked your pastor?
- **Interracial clubs and human relations groups**—How about selling a bundle order for your club to use for study purposes?
- **Christian Family Movement groups**—Perhaps you have thought of selling COMMUNITY in your neighborhood as an action for the month. Would this fit in with your Gospel resolution for this month?
- **Seminaries**—Many rectors encourage the reading of COMMUNITY by seminarians who may well encounter the facts of race relations in their priestly work.
- **Schools**—Teachers use COMMUNITY in their sociology and religion classes. In one Chicago high school students outline stories and relate them to chapters in their text books. It helps statistics come alive for students.

Prizes will be awarded to the top "salesmen" who obtain the largest amount of money for subscriptions during the two-month drive. First prize is a week free of cost at the Friendship House of your choice, plus \$35.00 toward train or bus fare. Second prize is a statue of Blessed Martin by Father McGlynn.

Remember, when you send in orders you've sold, mark them "FOR SUB DRIVE" so you'll receive credit for the sale. Good luck!

Free literature bonus for two-year subscriptions.

All subscribers who order COMMUNITY now for two years will receive special literature as a bonus. Two years of COMMUNITY costs only \$2.00.

COMMUNITY

4233 South Indiana Avenue
Chicago 15, Illinois

Rates: \$1.00 a year
\$2.00 for two years
\$1.25 a year foreign

Friendship House Monthly Paper

Bundles of 10 to 99 copies a month are 7 cents a copy; orders of 100 and more copies a month are 5 cents a copy.

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Loretta Butler

Civil Rights

A Child's Eyeview



ONE SUNDAY AFTERNOON about three weeks ago, an elementary school classroom in New Orleans was integrated. How did this happen?

That afternoon a reporter had called, explaining that he'd written an article on integration in the South and wanted a picture of the way future classrooms would look. We made a few phone calls, and by the appointed time an interracial group of children, all about the same age, were waiting in the parish school.

White Children Take It in Stride

We adults at Caritas, an interracial group living and working in this neighborhood of young Negro home-owners, were delighted to see the children playing together. The white children took the proceedings in their stride.

However, we couldn't help noticing the initial stiffness of the colored children—even though they were familiar with the school. But by the time the photographer arrived, all the children were enjoying themselves thoroughly.

How Do Children Really Feel?

The incident made me wonder—just how do children here feel about the racial discrimination and injustices which develop them? How often do we consider the extent to which their emotional and spiritual well-being is affected? What are the youngsters really thinking and feeling as we adults discuss the latest incidents?

As a teacher in the elementary grades I have heard many comments which indicate the depths of the children's reactions. Even more revealing have been the feelings they do not express in words.

Revealing Gestures

By the time he has reached the middle grades, a Negro child has a very definite idea of how far he can go and what he can do in his little world. A gesture, a feigned smile of indifference, a slight shrug of the shoulder saying, "what's the use?" speak volumes. They indicate that segregation damages the soul as well as the body.

The following is a cross section of comments made by my pupils:

"My daddy's a policeman. He can go into a restaurant and arrest a man who is disorderly, but he can't even buy a sandwich in there. Is that fair?" (From a fourth grade boy I taught in Washington, D.C.)

"I'm Tired of Having to Fight"

"Miss Butler, I'm so tired of always having to fight boys who make fun of me." (Sobbingly expressed by a 12-year-old Jewish pupil while I was working in a reading clinic at Catholic University.)

"My grandfather and grandmother went to the church that was closed in Jesuit Bend. Now they have to go way down the road to another Catholic church—but some white people stop by for them, and they go together." (One of the altar boys in my present classroom in New Orleans.)

"What Did the Priest Do?"

"We heard about the ladies getting beat up because they had colored children in their catechism classes. Will the colored children still go to those classes? What did the priest do?" (Archbishop Rummel suspended services at this church when white parishioners prevented a Negro priest from saying Mass.)

"The Delta theater is opening in a few days, and it's just for colored. We used to have to go away across town to get to a colored theater."

"I Forgot and Sat Down in Front"

"One day I forgot and sat down in a seat in the front of the bus. A white man sat beside me. I didn't say anything, and he didn't say anything either."

"Miss Butler, did you hear the terrible names they called colored people on the radio and television?" (Around election time.)

"Did you hear the things that man said would happen if colored children went to white schools? My mother said she certainly wouldn't vote for him."

Racist Candidate

The day of the voting I noticed one of my boys hit at the picture poster of the candidate who had made racism a major part of his campaign strategy.

"Dr. ———, why don't they start integration? Last year most of the kids in my class were for it—now there aren't so many." (Question asked by a little white girl, about 12, of the speaker at an open forum on school integration in New Orleans.)



(Elroy Davis)

Lily-white Sales Force

"We have a new grocery store in the project, and they don't have any colored people working there. Yet most of the customers are colored."

"But, mother I want to drink the colored water." (A white child's remark in the dime store, when she saw Jim Crow drinking fountains.)

Reads Heart-warming Philosophy

As a teacher, formerly in a public school and currently in a parochial school, it is heart-warming to re-read the philosophy of the Catholic Elementary School Curriculum—that it is the work of the school to bring the child and truth happily together. And to hear read at Mass the pastoral letter of Archbishop Rummel explaining that a final decision is pending on the question of racial integration in the Catholic schools of our archdiocese. "Racial segregation as such," wrote the Archbishop, "is morally wrong and sinful."

—Loretta Butler

For several years Loretta worked at St. Peter Claver Center in Washington. Now she is a resident volunteer at Caritas Center in New Orleans. For more news about Loretta, see Readers Write, page 7.